AMERICAN FEDERATION OF LABOR

WEEKLY NEWS SERVICE

The A. F. of L. Weekly News Service gives news accounts and official interpretations of matters affecting labor contained in the executive, legislative, and judicial fields, and contains other information of benefit to the trade union movement.

Entered as second-class matter September 30, 1912, at the Post Office at Washington, D. C., under the Act of August 24, 1912. Acceptance for mailing at special rate of postage provided for in Sec. 1103, Act of October 3, 1917, authorized July 11, 1918.

WHOLE NO. 1789 — WILLIAM GREEN, President — WASHINGTON, D. C., TUESDAY, JULY 24, 1945 — GEORGE MEANY, Secretary-Treasurer — VOL. 35, NO. 30

Thru Payroll Savings

LABOR, USA

Washington, D. C.—The third edition of the American Federationist of the Air, broadcast on the "Labor, USA" program over the American Broadcasting Company network, presented the following outstanding feature articles to supplement the news:

Labor Looks at Congress

By LEWIS G. HINES

A. F. of L. Legislative Representative

The House of Representatives has recessed for the summer. The Senate is expected to follow suit in another week or two. With the 79th session of Congress holding for vacation, this appears to be an appropriate time to review the work it has done thus far.

High on the credit side must be placed the accomplishments of Congress in the international field. It is a foregone conclusion that the Senate will ratify the San Francisco Charter binding the United Nations to act for the preservation of world peace. Coupled with congressional approval of the Bretton Woods Monetary Agreements, this action marks a historic abandonment of American isolationism. The American Federation of Labor, which endorsed both the charter and the Bretton Woods pact, is highly pleased by the outcome.

On domestic issues, the record of this Congress is somewhat spotty. We take off our hats to the lawmakers for adopting legislation giving almost two million government employees their first increase in more than twenty years. That was constructive. Also labor wishes to commend Congress for defeating all attempts to enact a compulsory labor draft. Events have proved the wisdom of the American Federation of Labor's opposition to such legislation. In fact, Congress deserves a boost for refusing to approve any anti-labor bills at this session.

But there is another side to this picture. Congress has failed dismally to provide for human needs in the reconversion program. It has endangered the situation of millions of war workers by what may be dubbed by critics by postponing action on President Truman's urgent recommendations for increasing unemployment compensation. It hasn't lifted a finger to advance the Wagner-Murray-Dingell Social Security amendments, designed to safeguard the nation's health. It failed to approve the Norton bill which would permit the Labor Department to wage a campaign against preventable industrial accidents.

These are some of the pros and cons on the record of the 79th Congress to date. Labor is grateful to Congress for its constructive achievements and hopes it will hasten to correct its errors of omission when it gets back on the job next October.

The Navy Speaks to Labor

By REAR ADMIRAL E. G. ALLEN, U.S.N.

I have just returned on tour covering the Far Eastern fighting front, the Central and Southwest Pacific, the China-India supply lines and bases, and the industrial Navy Yards of Honolulu and the West Coast of the United States. It makes one proud to see the American combination on land at work. It is a competent, skilled team, getting ahead on a dirty job. American ingenuity, brawn and brains getting things done in the mud and rain, working against time, disease, infection and insects, while they rout the Japs out of their foxholes and caves. They are trying to shorten the war for us.

Again this week our sailor shipmates have told us one of the most dramatic events of the war, a portent of the final act in the Pacific theater. The great battlewagons of our Navy stood five miles off the Japanese coast shelling its cities and industrial targets, unchallenged by sea or ground fire—Halsey spitting in Hirohito's eye. This is a long way from December 1941, when the sneak attack on Pearl Harbor laid low the major portion of our battle strength. We have come back the long road to the new Navy to victory, step by step, made possible by the sacrifices of our fighting men and the almost incredible accomplishments of American industry and labor.

We must remember that when our naval ships go into enemy waters they take risks of heavy casualties and damage; and in the recent combined operations around Okinawa, your Navy suffered heavy punishment. We were opposing at close range the ships and the shore-based aviation of an empire. We paid a heavy price. Many ships were damaged; and we must pay that price again on each invasion of territory that is vital to the Japanese. The Japanese are seriously weakened, but they are cunning, dangerous and tenacious fighters, and will resist invasion all the way; and our ships will continue to be damaged, and American workers are the people who must repair them.

More and more, as the Fleet is immobilized in the shadow of the enemy's home islands in support of attacks, our ships will be subject to attacks by enemy air and undersea forces. Damaged ships mean loss of fighting power, with a temporary reduction in fleet efficiency. It is imperative that damaged vessels be returned to action speedily.

This battle for repairs has to be fought here at home. It has to be fought by American labor, working day in and day out around the clock in shipyards and repair plants such as those at Pearl Harbor today. It has to be fought by the faces of workmen in our industrial plants; but labor has to keep putting it out until we knock out the Japanese. The Fleet can only know how soon we can give them back their damaged ships. Every out-of-service ship will mean fewer antiaircraft guns and fewer carrier planes in the air. A delay in the return of those ships delays the end of the war. It is labor's problem and responsibility, and I know they will meet it.

The Japanese are like a boxer badly hit, hanging on hoping to be saved by the bell. They must be hit again and again and driven to the floor, off balance. We must continue to keep all possible combat units in action. The Navy asks you to make that your slogan and help us speed the victory.

Vanishing Aircraft Jobs

By BORIS SHISHKIN

A. F. of L. Economist

"Will there be work for me after the war?"

"One and three-quarter million workers in the aircraft industry are asking this question.

All types of American fighting planes have made history in the air during this war. The majority of these ships, their engines, parts and assemblies, have been built by aircraft workers who are members of the International Association of Machinists, affiliated with the American Federation of Labor. These men and women who have broken all records in aircraft production realize that the aircraft industry will shrink rapidly after the war is won. But they want to make sure that as a matter of national policy, what American people make provision for normal peacetime growth of aircraft production.

Harvey Brown, the president of the International Association of Machinists, said to me, "Our great aircraft production program has contributed enormously to victory in Europe. It is now sealing the doom of Japan. Aircraft production should not be allowed to collapse after victory. We want to be sure that the nation will support every effort on the part of the government to maintain in operation a sufficient number of aircraft plants to enable American to retain her air supremacy."

With this objective in mind, we should look upon the future of the aircraft industry with sober realism. At the peak of the war, only three hundred and twenty planes were used to maintain our entire commercial air service at home. Before the war the aircraft construction industry employed only about 60,000 workers. Today, it has grown into a gigantic industry employing 1,750,000. all of the military orders will be canceled, except for the experimental types. The rest of production will revert to civilian needs.

The airlines at home are expected to buy some 400 newly built transport planes. Orders will be coming in from abroad. A substantial volume of small light planes for private use may also be produced.

Yet with all this, the prospects are that immediately after VJ-Day aircraft employment will drop to as low as 60,000 or 70,000. Perhaps in four to five years, the industry can provide steady jobs to a quarter of a million workers. This would be a mere 15 percent of the total present employment.

To assure substantial opportunities for aircraft workers, it is essential that a program be developed to make the best use of existing aircraft plants for production of other articles which could best utilize the skill and experience of aircraft workers. Most aircraft plants are too big and expensive to be readily converted. It should be possible to make use of these costly and modern facilities by dividing them up into smaller units for various purposes, so that a number of different manufacturers could take over parts of the plant and provide work for the displaced aircraft workers.

For aircraft construction itself, the government should be to launch promptly a large program of construction of airports, landing strips, and other facilities to meet the certain demand for many years to come of America's aviation. Our eagles are masters of the air. Lack of planning should not clip their wings.

Next week I will report to you on postwar job opportunities among office workers, America's first line men and women.

NAVY PRAISES LABOR FOR AIRCRAFT OUTPUT

Washington, D. C.—A tribute to naval airpower, and to labor and industry whose part made that power possible, is contained in a report by Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Air Artemus L. Gates, who disclosed that navy contractors turned out 20,- 413 aircraft in 1944, a figure which nearly equals the total previous production since Pearl Harbor.

Despite some manpower and critical material shortages, Mr. Gates said, these contractors and their employees have managed to meet almost all their schedules "in a manner deserving of the greatest credit."

Florida Ban On Union Shop Upset By NWLB In Important Test Case

Washington, D. C.—In an important test case, the National War Labor Board ruled that Federal laws invalidate the Florida anti-closed shop, constitutional ban on the closed shop. This was a decisive first-round victory for the American Federation of Labor in a legal fight which is expected to go all the way to the Supreme Court of the United States for final decision.

Rejecting a petition by the Attorney General of Florida, the Regional WLB of Atlanta in a case involving three AFL unions at the Port St. Joe (Florida) paper mill, industry members dissented.

J. Tom Watson, the State Attorney General, asked the NWLB to intervene because of a state constitutional amendment adopted last November. A United States district court recently held the amendment valid.

The paper mill did not appeal from the regional board maintenance-of-membership directive, but the state itself took up the issue.

The NWLB, in its decision, held that the War Labor Board is clearly supreme when in conflict with either state law or state constitution.

In reaching its decision the board said it was guided by Article 6, Section 2, of the United States Constitution, which states:

"This Constitution, and the laws of the United States which shall be made in pursuance thereof or which shall be made under the authority of the United States shall be the supreme law of the land, and the judges in every state shall be bound thereby, anything in the Constitution or laws of any state to the contrary notwithstanding."

The AFL holds that the Florida amendment violates the United States constitution's guarantees of freedom of contract as well as the National Labor Relations Act and the War Labor Disputes Act, under which the NWLB derives its statutory authority to act in labor disputes which threaten to interfere with the war effort.

Under the standard maintenance-of-membership clause, workers are allowed 15 days to decide whether to withdraw from a union. Those remaining members must keep up their union dues for the duration of the contract or lose their jobs.

The first agreement between the Florida company and the unions in 1939 contained a union security clause. The concern makes sulphate kraft linerboard, corrugated board and kraft pulp. The WLB said that three other comparable paper mills in Florida had full union-shop agreements reached through negotiations.

The three unions involved in the decision are the International Brotherhood of Paper Makers, International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers and International Association of Machinists. Together they represent about 450 workers.

SAY, LISTEN!

For the rest of this year, the AFL presents each Saturday evening at 6:45 P.M., EWT, over the nation-wide network of the American Broadcasting Company a radio news-magazine, featuring the latest news at home and abroad and special reports by expert commentators on important labor problems. This program is listed in the radio columns of your newspaper as "Labor-U.S.A." Our own subtitle for the program is "The American Federationist of the Air." Don't miss these bright, newsy broadcasts! Listen every Saturday night!

A Challenge To The People

Washington, D. C.—In a radio debate on the "Town Hall Meeting of the Air" program, AFL President William Green called health insurance a challenge to the American people. His opening statement follows:

By WILLIAM GREEN

President, American Federation of Labor

The American Federation of Labor wholeheartedly supports health insurance for all workers.

If I were to announce that a million workers in this nation were not on their jobs today because of strikes or labor disputes, you would be horrified. Yet a million industrial workers are absent today from their work because of illness or injury.

These are figures for industrial workers. All told about seven million persons are absent from work every day because of sickness and disability.

Not all of this illness could be prevented but much of it could. A study based on Selective Service data indicated that nearly one-third of the men rejected for military service could be qualified for limited military service only, could be made fit for general military service by corrective medical, surgical or dental treatment, or rehabilitation.

The workers of America have faith in the doctors of America. They want their services but how to pay for them is the difficulty.

Illness among workers is a two-edged sword. When it strikes the breadwinner, income stops suddenly. At the same time expenditures increase. There are always the physicians' fees. Sometimes expensive drugs and medicine and a nurse are necessary. X-rays and special laboratory tests may be called for and the sick person may require hospitalization. If the sickness strikes some member of the family the breadwinner is worried about meeting these extra costs on top of his regular bills. Efficiency is impaired and his job jeopardized.

Workers cannot meet these costs by individual savings. No worker would know how much to save, for he has no way of knowing whether the illness will be slight or serious.

He has no way of knowing when illness will strike. He may start saving today and be stricken tomorrow before he has had a chance to put away anything like a sufficient amount.

Workers cannot budget for these things about individuals the law of averages tells us how many people will be ill at a given time, and what proportion of them will need expensive treatments. In short, though none of us knows what any individual health bill will be for the next twelve months we do know what the national needs cost. So workers say "Let's pool our resources and by small contributions from our pay envelopes let's create a common fund out of which we can meet these costs.

We pay them anyway and it is much better to do it the easy way and in a way that will make medical care available to all. That is why workers are worrying about how they are to pay for it." To the workers of America health insurance is as simple as that and the argument for it is as irrefutable.

Workers of America are supporting the Wagner-Murray-Dingell bill because they are convinced that its enactment would be a long step forward in making health a reality for millions of people now denied it by making available medical and hospital care to them and their families.

This bill specifically guarantees the free choice of the physician by the patient, and of the hospital by the physician. It provides for full democratic local participation of all interested parties in the operation of a system of group medical practice and leaves the professional aspects of medical care in the hands of the doctors where they belong.

It relieves the physician of the onus of overcharging the rich in order to provide charity care for the poor.

It will make medical care more generally available, providing for the construction of hospitals and health centers throughout the country.

The health of the nation is of transcendent importance. A healthy nation is a strong nation. A universal appreciation of this fact will influence the people of the nation to accord a full measure of support to the enactment of health insurance legislation. The development and maintenance of a high standard of industrial health is essential to our ability to fight for the preservation of our form of government—freedom, liberty and democracy—and very largely upon the establishment and preservation of the health of the nation. The health of our nation depends upon the health of our workers and upon that of our prosperity rests. The care and preservation of the health of all the people of our nation constitutes a challenge to the American people.

UNIONS WANT $3 BILL TO HONOR ROOSEVELT

Washington, D. C.—A proposal to perpetuate the memory of President Roosevelt by having the government print a three-dollar bill, with his portrait on one side and a picture of the Roosevelt Library at Hyde Park on the other, was made in a resolution adopted by Bindery and Miscellaneous Workers Union, Local 32, of the International Brotherhood of Bookbinders.

TEXTILE UNION OFFICIAL WINS ARMY DECORATION

Washington, D. C.—Corporal Bert Hymen, a former member of the Executive Council of the United Textile Workers of America (AFL) has been awarded a war medal.

Corp. Hyman served in Germany with the 30th Tactical Reconnaissance Group which has recently awarded the Presidential Unit Citation for its exploits in action. In addition, he wears four battle stars on his European Theater of Operations ribbon.

Congress Backs AFL Pleas For Higher Wage Rates Now

Six Senators Sponsor Bill To Increase Jobless Pay

Washington, D. C.—Six Senators introduced a bill, endorsed by the American Federation of Labor, designed to carry out President Truman's recommendations for more adequate unemployment compensation during reconversion.

While Congress rushed enactment of a reconversion measure which will give big corporations tax relief to the tune of five billion dollars so they will have ready cash for reconversion, the new bill to meet human needs during the same period is destined to go over until Congress comes back to work in October. When the House of Representatives recessed until the fall, action on the unemployment compensation was necessarily postponed.

Senator Kilgore, of West Virginia, said he was joined in sponsoring the new measure by Senators Wagner, Murray, Guffey, Thomas (of Utah) and Pepper.

Commenting on the bill, AFL President William Green said it will meet emergency needs and therefore should be enacted but he pointed out that it does not provide the long-term basic improvements in social security which "are so sorely needed" and which are included in the Wagner-Murray-Dingell bill.

The emergency measure provides that the federal government shall supplement state funds so that persons now earning $50 a week or more will receive $25 a week for twenty-six weeks in any one year when unemployed. Those earning less than $50 a week would get lower compensation.

WMC Confident Unemployed Total Will Stay Under Two Million Till 1946

Washington, D. C.—The War Manpower Commission predicted that the unemployment picture for the year ahead isn't as gloomy as most people expect.

But estimates on which the WMC forecast is based are predicated on continuation of the war with Japan.

A sudden V-J-Day would skyrocket unemployment figures almost overnight to 7,000,000 or more.

WMC estimates are based on present Army and Navy schedules for munitions production and personnel requirements. Pacific theater, and on War Production Board plans for reconverting unneeded war production lines to civilian production.

Any change in these plans would throw the estimates entirely out of gear. But if conditions remain constant, the WMC says there will be an increase in unemployment up to the 2,000,000 mark by the end of August, dropping to 1,800,000 by December and up again to 1,800,000 by next June.

AFL economists declared the WMC's figures far too optimistic and dependent on too many "ifs."

Here is how the WMC arrived at its figures on unemployment:

It estimates that between VE-Day and December a total of 3,700,000 workers will leave the war part of war production out of a total of roughly 9,000,000. It estimates that during that same period 1,900,000 persons will be mustered out of the services. These two figures total 4,700,000 persons thrown on the labor market.

During the same period 3,400,000 workers will be absorbed by our civilian economy and an additional 600,000 persons of working age will be inducted into the Army and Navy. This makes a total of 4,000,000, which is still 700,000 short of the number thrown on the labor market.

Of those no longer needed in war plants, or mustered out of the Army, 500,000 will not reenter the labor market; some will go back to school, some of the women (with their husbands back from war) will want to go back to keeping house, and many of the old people who worked for patriotic reasons will want to quit the daily grind.

This leaves 500,000 still out of work. Add that to the figure of 800,- 000 unemployed last May—and you get 1,300,000, which is WMC's predicted unemployment for next December.

The same formula is used in arriving at the prediction for June:

WMC estimates that 3,500,000 of the original 9,000,000 war workers will have quit, and that a total of 2,400,000 will have been mustered out of the services, for a total of 7,700,000.

It estimates that 5,100,000 will have been given employment in civilian production, trades and services and that 1,200,000 will have been inducted, for a total of 6,300,000. That leaves 1,400,000 on the jobless side of the ledger.

Cutbacks Less Than Expected

Washington, D. C.—The War Production Board gave industry a munitions work-sheet calling for 1945 production to be gradually tapered down to $3,400,000,000 in December, 70 percent of the March wartime peak.

Arms output in July is still running about 85 percent of the March high-water mark, despite cutbacks, the WPB said. By the end of August the level will be 80 percent.

The schedules are intended, the WPB said as "an aid to manufacturers by outlining roughly the size of the job still to be done to achieve final victory."

Meanwhile, J. W. Small, acting chairman of the War Production Board, told the Meat committee investigating the war effort that the agency, in handling the reconversion phases of munitions plants, has dealt with "about seven thousand terminations of contracts and over 1,816 dealing with contracts between $100,000 and $500,000 monthly.

Almost 2,000 plants were affected, he said, but in only forty cases was it necessary to shut off production without at least seven days' notice to the producer.

In those cases, he said, inventories on hand were enough for the Pacific war and the sole reason to continue the work would have been to keep in employment. The reconversion act forbids production for this purpose only.

"The two and a half months since VE-Day have not borne out forebodings of major dislocations of industries and workers," Mr. Small asserted.

Rules For Labor Press Contest

Newark, N. J.—Rules for the competition on journalistic excellence sponsored by the International Labor Press were announced by Lewis M. Herrmann, chairman of its Committee on Awards.

First and second prizes will be awarded for editorial excellence and for excellence in typography and presswork in the following three separate classifications:

International union publications in magazine format; monthly labor papers in tabloid format; and weekly labor papers.

In addition prizes open to all papers will be awarded for the best single editorial, the best editorial cartoon, the best pictorial display, the most effective editorial crusade, the best front page from the standpoint of news style and of art or pictorial work; the best feature article and the best agricultural column.

The rules for the contest follow:

1—Publications to be entered in the first three classifications outlined above is confined to affiliates of the International Labor Press and/or affiliates of the American Federation of Labor.

2—Participating publications must submit only five regular or special editions, published between September 11, 1944, and September 29, 1945.

3—Entries should be submitted to Lewis M. Herrmann, chairman, Committee on Awards, 22 13th Avenue, Newark 3, N. J., not later than October 1, 1945. Each entry must be marked with card designating classification under which it shall be judged. War entries securely to avoid damage in transit. Winning publications will be exhibited at ILPA convention, and awards made during that session. In event convention is called off, or postponed, awards will be made at such time as may be designated by the Executive Committee of the organization.

4—A $2.00 entrance fee must accompany publications entered, to help defray expenses. This fee covers all entries of any publication.

5—Selections of Committee on Awards shall be final, and publications submitted become property of the ILPA.

Petitions Truman To Break Wage Freeze And Weighs Higher Minimum

Washington, D. C.—Congress moved in two major directions to correct the alarming shrinkage of take-home pay by lifting the wage rates of American workers. Developments were:

1—Seventy members of the House of Representatives signed a petition asking President Truman to boost increases in hourly rates of pay at least 20 percent higher than the present limits of the "Little Steel" formula.

2—Legislation was introduced in both houses of Congress providing for an immediate hike in minimum wages to 65 cents an hour with progressive increases up to a 75-cent floor in 3 years.

This legislation was sponsored by ten liberal Senators and by Rep. Frank Hook, who said that other members of the House would undoubtedly join him later in attaching their names to the bill.

The present floor for wages of workers engaged in interstate industry is 50 cents an hour under the Fair Labor Standards Act, which the new bill seeks to amend.

The House petition for general wage rate increases was announced by Rep. Holifield, of California, and falls right in line with labor's demands.

Rep. Holifield declared that the President would be asked "to waive" the present wage policy by executive order and "restore the original authority of the War Labor Board to approve or direct such wage adjustments as may be necessary and which will not substantially affect the cost of living."

"All the evidence of cutbacks, layoffs, loss of overtime pay and, in the case of the short work week, a direct cut in the pay envelope, point to economic trouble right ahead unless the present national wage policy is revised to permit an increase of at least 20 percent in the basic pay rate in order to keep up mass purchasing power and avoid sowing the seeds of a disastrous depression in the immediate future," he asserted.

"We urge all members of Congress to sign this petition."

The Wage-Hour amendments fall short of labor's policy because of a provision which would start overtime pay after 46 hours in the first year, 42 hours in the second year and 40 hours after that. Union leaders could not see why the present standard 40-hour week should be thus set back.

The wage provisions of the bill were generally considered acceptable by labor. While setting an immediate rock-bottom floor of 65 cents an hour, the measure would permit industry committees operating under the Wage-Hour Division to increase the minimum up to the 75-cent level by voluntary action from the date set for general application.

Sponsors of the bill in the Senate included Senators Mead, Pepper, Wagner, James Murray, Guffey, Kilgore, Elbert Thomas, Chavez, Magnuson and Francis J. Myers.

WORKERS TO CELEBRATE AIR FORCE BIRTHDAY

Washington, D. C.—Celebrating Army Air Force's 38th Birthday, August 1st, workers at aircraft factories throughout the country—hundreds of thousands of them members of International Machinists, Carpenters, Electrical Workers, Teamsters, and other trades, AFL, making engines, parts and doing the final assembling of airplanes—will be entertained with feeds, open house ceremonies at their plants, where exhibitions of aircraft and equipment will be displayed for the community's citizens.

The occasion will be used for reporting to the American air power's contribution to victory in Europe, and to the Japs, and to tell workers the Japs are defeated. Top army and civilian representatives will speak in high praise of labor's and industry's mammoth production job which gave Army Air Forces its destructive might over our enemies.

UNITED GARMENT WORKERS GET WAGE INCREASES

Washington, D. C.—A voluntary agreement providing for wage increases by 25 percent manufacturing men's work clothing was approved by the War Labor Board.

The agreement between the Union-Made Garment Manufacturers' Association and 6,000 employees of the United Garment Workers of America (AFL) also provides for a minimum wage of 50 cents an hour and more liberal vacations.

The board approved the adjustments to correct what it called substandards of living.

GENERAL PRAISES LABOR

Washington, D. C.—In high praise of labor for its part in giving the American soldier and sailor the finest weapons of the war, Lt. General Robert C. Richardson, Jr., Commanding General, Army Forces, Middle Pacific, said from his headquarters over Army Hour's recent broadcast: "I believe we know how to use them effectively!"